

REMARKS

Claims 4-14, 16, 17, 19 and 20 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3, 15 and 18 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. No new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the cancellation of claims 1-3, 15 and 18: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiner Abdulsalam in the February 5, 2008 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the Office Action's indication that claims 4-14, 16, 17, 19 and 20 are allowed. By this Amendment, as noted above, claims 1-3, 15 and 18 are canceled. Thus, for at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance.

II. The Rejection is Moot

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 15 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 11-198745 to Wataru et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,904,359 to Jones. The rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 1-3, 15 and 18.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:RBI/hs

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: February 11, 2008

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